

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 021505Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8459

INFO CO MSGBN ARLINGTON VA

AMCONSUL KARACHI

UNCLAS BEIRUT 1070

STATE FOR ASST SECRETARY ATHERTON AND DIRECTOR GENERAL

STATE FOR A/SY

KARACHI FOR RMO

KARACHI FOR RSS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJ: PROPOSED COMMENDATION FOR BEIRUT MSG DETACHMENT

REF: BEIRUT 0983 (NOTAL)

1. IN VIEW OF EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND INITIATIVE SHOWN BY MEMBERS OF BEIRUT MSG DETACHMENT UNDER DANGEROUS AND TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES, I REQUEST THAT APPROPRIATE ACTION BE INITIATED IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR SERVICE.

2. IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT THE BEIRUT DETACHMENT BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION WITH THE FOLLOWING CITATION: "FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY DURING CIVIL STRIFE FROM APRIL 1, 1975, TO JANUARY 31, 1976, IN BEIRUT, LEBANON. DURING THIS PERIOD, THE ABILITY OF THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES TO MAINTAIN CIVIL ORDER DETERIORATED, AND THE CITY BECAME INCREASINGLY SUBJECT TO THE DOMINATION OF VARIETY OF WARRING ARMIES, INCLUDING ELEMENTS OF THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT. IN THE ENSUING PERIOD

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OF URBAN WARFARE THE MARINE SECURITY GARDS PLAYED A KEY

ROLE. ACTING AS NET CONTROL STATION, THEY SUPERVISED THE EMBASSY'S VOICE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS LINK WHICH WAS IMPORTANT AT ALL TIMES AND PARTICULARLY CRUCIAL ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WHEN THERE WERE ATTACKS ON MISSION VEHICLES AND PERSONNEL. WHILE PROTECTING THE CHANCERY, AS WELL AS TRAVELING TO AND FROM WORK, THE DETACHMENT WAS OFTEN EXPOSED TO SNIPER FIRE. PARTICIPATION OF THE DETACHMENT IN THE EMBASSY'S SECURITY OPERATIONS AND COORDINATING CENTER DURING THE "BATTLE OF THE HOTELS" MADE A VITAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXTRICATION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO WERE TRAPPED AND UNDER FIRE.

"IN QUIETER TIMES, MEMBERS OF THE DETACHMENT VOLUNTARILY MADE USE OF THEIR MARINE CORPS SPECIALTIES BY OFFERING TIMELY AND FEASIBLE SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING CHANCERY DEFENSE, CONSTRUCTING REACTION EQUIPMENT LOOKERS, ENHANCING THE ARMOR PORTECTION OF EMBASSY VEHICLES, AND ENSURING THE PROPER FUNCTIONING OF THE CHANCERY EMERGENCY GENERATORS. THOUGH WORKING UNDER UNCERTAIN AND DANGEROUS CONDITIONS, THE ESPRIT OF THE DETACHMENT REMAINED HIGH AND THEIR APPROACH TO ALL PROBLEMS WAS CALM AND PROFESSIONAL. THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF ALL TASKS, BOTH ASSIGNED AND VOLUNTEERED, IN A UNIFORMLY OUTSTANDING MANNER WAS CRITICAL TO THE SAFETY OF THE CHANCERY ITSELF AND OF AMERICAN AND LEBANESE EMBASSY PERSONNEL. AS SUCH, IT UPHELD THE FINEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE".

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